

JCCC College Scholar

Williams to discuss Endangered Species Act

During law school, Deborah Williams, associate professor, environmental science and biology, argued, “that the best environmental policies are fashioned where the objectives of law and science intersect.”

As a scholar of law and biology, Williams is the perfect candidate to examine and give insight into laws about endangered species protection, the subject of her two JCCC College Scholars presentations. Although her daytime and evening lectures both focus on the Endangered Species Act, she purposefully chooses two very distinct endangered species, the gray wolf, *Canis lupus*, a “charismatic” popular species, and the more “obscure” species, the Devil’s Hole pupfish, *Cyprinodon diabolus*, to highlight how legal and ecological issues impact endangered species.

All JCCC College Scholars lectures are free and open to the public. Williams’ two lectures are:

- *Rekindling a Dying Fire: Legal and Ecological Issues Shaping Wolf Recovery in the United States*, 7-8 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 20, in the Hudson Auditorium of the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art. A reception begins at 6:30 p.m. in room 101 A-B Regnier Center
- *The Devil Is in the Details: Preserving *Cyprinodon diabolus*, the Devil’s Hole Pupfish*, 11 a.m.-noon, Thursday, Oct. 21, in the Hudson Auditorium.

In the evening lecture, Williams will focus on the general ecology and behavior of wolves, key provisions of the Endangered Species Act and legal cases impacting wolf recovery, which continues to be a controversial issue. The presentation will close with an examination of the ESA’s philosophy and practice and its effectiveness in preservation of biodiversity.

The daytime presentation will highlight a Supreme Court case, *Cappaert v. United States*. Here the examination will be that of economic interests and property rights balanced against protection of an endangered species prior to the



Deborah Williams will present two lectures about the Endangered Species Act as the first JCCC College Scholar of the academic year.

Endangered Species Act. The details of the natural history of *Cyprinodon diabolus* (a tiny fish found only in one small water-filled cavern in Nevada) and the legal maneuvering used for its preservation exemplify how legal and ecological issues impact endangered species protection.

Williams has two bachelor’s degrees, one in biology and one in animal science and industry, and a master’s degree in student counseling and personnel services, all from Kansas State University. She has a master’s degree in ecology and evolutionary biology and a juris doctor with a Natural Resources and Environmental Law certificate and Tribal Law (Federal Indian Law) certificate from the University of Kansas. She is currently a PhD candidate (ABD) in curriculum and instruction at K-State and pursuing a master’s degree in philosophy at KU.

At JCCC, Williams teaches a variety of courses including biology, ecology, environmental science, bioethics, *Natural History of Kansas* and a new class starting this fall, *Environmental Policy and Law*, a course she developed. She also serves as a part-time counselor at JCCC and is an adjunct law professor at Washburn University School of Law and the KU School of Law.

The JCCC College Scholars program showcases the research of four faculty each academic year. The other three scholars and dates of presentations are Dr. Dennis Arjo, philosophy professor, Nov. 3-4; Dr. Stanislav Svojanovsky, adjunct associate professor, science, Feb. 1 and 3, 2011; and Terri Easley, associate professor, speech and debate, and debate coach, April 13-14, 2011. For more information about the JCCC College Scholars program, contact Karen Martley, director, Staff and Organizational Development, 913-469-8500, ext. 3467. 